



Kentucky Transportation Cabinet
Office of Highway Safety

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Governor's highway safety committee hopes to move Kentucky 'Toward Zero Deaths'
Effort aims to reduce fatalities, serious injuries

FRANKFORT, Ky. (Feb. 19, 2010) – To further reduce highway fatalities and serious injuries, Gov. Steve Beshear today directed his executive highway safety committee to engage in a collaborative effort aimed at moving Kentucky "Toward Zero Deaths."

The effort — part of the work of the Governor's Executive Committee on Highway Safety to update and implement the Strategic Highway Safety Plan: Toward Zero Deaths — will focus on the critical, four E's of highway safety: engineering, education, enforcement and emergency response. Multiple agencies representing law enforcement, emergency responders, engineering and highway safety officials will be involved.

Preliminary numbers indicate that 792 people died in crashes statewide in 2009 — a number Gov. Beshear insists is too high.

"I'm pleased that our highway fatalities have decreased for five consecutive years," Gov. Beshear said. "However, there is still work to be done. Even one fatality is too many. This plan ensures that everybody is at the table to make sure we are doing everything we can to reduce these serious crashes. If just one life is saved through this effort, it will have been worth it."

"I am confident that by working together to identify key safety needs in these four areas, Kentucky can move 'Toward Zero Deaths,'" said Acting Transportation Secretary Mike Hancock, who is chair of the committee and Gov. Beshear's designated representative for highway safety.

The Kentucky State Police will combine efforts with local agencies to bring a strong enforcement presence throughout the state.

"A project of this magnitude provides a central focus and clear vision for all safety partners that will directly impact the number of fatal crashes in Kentucky," Kentucky State Police Commissioner Rodney Brewer said. "Strategic enforcement is essential in this multi-tiered approach to alter adverse driving behavior among motorists. Our agency is dedicated to reducing preventable deaths by enhancing highway safety through unique opportunities such as this."

“We fully support the ‘Toward Zero Deaths’ strategy,” Kentucky Sheriff’s Association Director Troy Young said. “Sheriffs across the Commonwealth will work with state and local law enforcement to reduce fatalities on our roadways. Together we can make a difference.”

Additionally, thousands of emergency medical responders have pledged to support the plan, according to Bob Hammonds, interim executive director of the Kentucky Board of Emergency Medical Services.

“Every day EMS workers see firsthand the tragic impact of highway fatalities,” Hammonds said. “Along with our partners on the Governor's Executive Committee on Highway Safety, we will work tirelessly to achieve zero deaths on Kentucky's highways.”

Members of the Governor’s Executive Committee on Highway Safety represent these organizations:

Alcohol Beverage Control
Department of Public Health
Federal Highway Administration
Federal Motor Carrier Safety Administration
Insurance Institute of Kentucky
Kentucky Administrative Office of the Courts
Kentucky Association of Chiefs of Police
Kentucky Board of Emergency Medical Services
Kentucky Injury Prevention and Research Center
Kentucky Office of Highway Safety
Kentucky Operation Lifesaver
Kentucky Sheriffs’ Association
Kentucky State Police
Kentucky Transportation Cabinet
Kentucky Transportation Center
Kentuckians for Better Transportation
Mothers Against Drunk Driving
National Safety Council
State Fire Marshal’s Office

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Eds. note: The 2009 fatality figure is preliminary because data is still being collected. A final report is expected in March. Highway fatalities have declined each year since 2005, when 985 died.